

{EBRUARY 23, 2004

**SCHAKOWSKY APPLAUDS  
KIDS IN DANGER CONTINUED COMMITMENT TO KEEPING  
CHILDREN SAFE**

**JOINS IN RELEASING  
SAFETY SHORTCUTS: CHILDREN'S PRODUCT RECALLS IN 2003**

**CHICAGO, IL - U.S. Representative Jan Schakowsky (D-IL) today applauded Kids In Danger for continuing to sound the alarm about federal policies that permit dangerous children toys and products to reach and remain in the marketplace.[] []**

Schakowsky, who is the ranking Democrat on the Commerce, Trade, and Consumer Protection Subcommittee, joined in releasing Safety Shortcuts: Children's Product Recalls in 2003.[] According to the report compiled by Kids In Danger: *.children's product recalls by the U.S. Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) dropped dramatically last year. Since 1999, recalls of children's products averaged 50% of total recalls; this year, the 66 children's products recalled represented only 30% of the 214 recalls.[] In addition, this drop is also seen in the number of units recalled. Compared to 2000, there were six times fewer units recalled in 2003.*"Dangerous products should never make it into nurseries, child care centers, or anyone's home in the first place.[] With Kids In Danger and committed consumer advocates, we will continue the fight to protect our children and to keep them safe," Schakowsky said.

Schakowsky is the author of the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act, H.R. 2911.[] The legislation would require durable children's products, such as high chairs, baby carriers, cradles, and play pens, to meet national safety standards.[] []

Schakowsky is currently battling the Consumer Product Safety Commission (CPSC) to end the sale of Yo-Yo Balls in the United States, a toy that is banned in six countries.[] Playing with Yo-Yo Balls has resulted in near strangulation of children and emergency room visits. Hundreds of complaints have been filed with the CPSC, however, the product is still being sold in many stores today.

Below is the written text of Schakowsky's statement:

**U.S. REPRESENTATIVE JAN SCHAKOWSKY (D-IL)**  
**FEBRUARY 23, 2004**  
**NEWS CONFERENCE WITH KIDS-IN-DANGER**

I applaud Kids In Danger, or KID, for all the work the organization continues to do to protect children from harmful products and for producing this useful and telling report on children's product recalls. It is appropriate that I am here today with Kids In Danger because we are experiencing a time when our kids truly are in danger.

As this study from Kids In Danger indicates, 2003 had the least children's product recalls in four years, and children's products were only 30% of all recalled products last year. Unfortunately, it appears that, while infants and children are the most vulnerable consumers in our society, the Consumer Product Safety Commission hesitates the most to recall children's products.

I am concerned with the philosophy of the CPSC. The industry is using our children as test dummies, and the CPSC is saying that they won't recall a product until a child is killed or seriously injured.

For example, I have been fighting since September to recall and ban the sale of yo-yo balls, ever since I heard from a mother in my district whose son was nearly strangled by the toy. I soon came to learn that children around the country had been visiting emergency rooms and experiencing close-calls because of yo-yo balls.

In fact, to date, the CPSC has received at least 309 incident reports of strangulation, eye injuries, and skin irritation due to yo-yo balls. And the toy has been banned in six countries. Yet the CPSC refuses to recall or ban the sale of the toy or even to recommend that stores voluntarily take it off their shelves! I will continue to do what I can to see that no more children are hurt by yo-yo balls.

Unfortunately, even recalls often are not enough to get dangerous products out of parents' hands. The Kids In Danger report shows that, last year, yet another child was killed by a crib that had been recalled in 1997.

We must work to keep dangerous products from ever making it onto store shelves or into nurseries, child care centers, or anyone's home in the first place. Last year I introduced the Infant and Toddler Durable Product Safety Act, H.R. 2911. This bill currently has 34 cosponsors.

The bill would require infant and toddler products, such as high chairs, baby carriers, cradles, and play pens, to receive a federal seal of approval before they are sold. This seal would demonstrate that those products have been independently tested and have met required national safety standards.

Under current law, the CPSC only issues voluntary safety standards and then relies on the industry to police itself. Only after companies have received a number of complaints

**and after children have been injured or even killed will a company, in conjunction with the CPSC, decide to recall a product. That is unacceptable.**

**I will continue to work with Kids In Danger and concerned parents and advocates across the country to pass the Infant and Toddler Durable Products Safety Act. I will also continue to urge the CPSC to put children's safety ahead of company profits and to become, once again, a true advocate on behalf of consumers.**